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ABSTRACT

This issue contains three fact sheets covering the impact of child care on work, the impact of family on work, and the impact of work on family. They are meant to be given to community and business leaders, employers, school board members, legislators, local community agency staff, and other individuals who desire a productive workforce. Each of the fact sheets is divided into two sections--statistics and implications. The statistics section presents the current situation of employees as they balance work and family, including child care. The implications section expresses suggestions for dealing with work, family, and child care issues. The fact sheets contain 6, 12, and 13 references respectively. (KC)

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Child Care, Family, and Work Issues: Current Statistics and Their Implications

Over the past several decades women have entered the workforce in increasing numbers. Their employment has created a ripple effect of issues in the workplace and in the home. Families are reassessing traditional roles regarding household management, child care, and the interrelationship of family and work. Women may be closing the earnings gap with men, but they still spend over twice as many hours as men doing housework. Women continue to have a greater role strain in balancing work and family issues compared to men. Yet, men are increasing their involvement in household management, parenting, and child care. They are also more likely to refuse new work assignments that threaten to reduce their family time.

Because of the role shifts and issues facing men and women, employers, educators, and administrators are implementing new family-friendly policies for their employees and students. In addition, educators are teaching all students employability skills, including balancing work and family. Administrators are beginning to implement new ways to reach potential students, such as distance learning, off-site learning, and providing child care and other support services. Employers, educators, and administrators must know how work, family, and child care affect the productivity and satisfaction of employees. Current statistics and their implications for educators and employees can aid in this understanding.

As in the last issue paper, this one also diverts from the standard technical/practical research narrative. Instead, it presents a set of fact sheets covering child care, family, and work issues. These fact sheets can be duplicated and used individually or in conjunction with one another. They are meant to be given to community and business leaders, employers, school board members, legislators, local community agency staff, and other individuals who desire a productive workforce. They can be used as public relation tools or as justification for programs and collaborative ventures. Educators and administrators can supplement these fact sheets with their own individual and state program accomplishments and successes to further strengthen the need and value of their programs.

The fact sheets are divided into two sections—**statistics** and **implications**. The **statistics** present the current situation of employees as they grapple with balancing work and family, including child care. Educators and administrators can use these statistics as teaching content, rationale for grants, and program evaluation and justification. The **implications** express suggestions for dealing with work, family, and child care issues. Educators and administrators can use these implications to infuse equity into programs, grants, and collaborations. They can also use them to identify effective recruitment and retention strategies for nontraditional employment.

The Ohio Department of Education, Division of Vocational and Adult Education is committed to providing critical, current information to aid educators and administrators in their roles at the local level. It is our hope that you will use these fact sheets to prepare students to become more satisfied and productive employees.

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Impact of Child Care on Work

Need for Child Care

In 1994, 62 percent of married mothers with a child under age six were in the work force (CFC, 1996, p. 45).

In 1990, 7.2 million mothers with 11.7 million children under age 15 worked full- or part-time during nonstandard hours. About 8 percent to 9 percent of mothers worked evenings or nights (CFC, 1996, p. 51).

In 1990, almost half of working poor parents* worked on a rotating or changing schedule, compared to one-quarter of working-class and middle-class mothers and one-third of working-class and middle-class fathers. One-third of the working poor and one-quarter of working-class mothers surveyed in the 1990 National Child Care Survey worked weekends (CFC, 1996, p. 52).

The national high school dropout rate for teen parents is 60 percent. In Ohio, teen parents in the Graduation, Reality, and Dual-role Skills (GRADS) program who received child care assistance through the Comprehensive Support Services (CSS)** child care grant experienced only a 2 percent dropout rate (CDF, 1990; ODE, 1996).

Of the adult vocational students served through the CSS grant in the 1995-96 school year, 44 percent reported having problems securing adequate dependent care prior to receiving CSS services (ODE, 1996).

Availability and Affordability of Child Care

According to the National Academy of Sciences, "There is consistent evidence of a relatively low supply of care for infants, for school-age children, for children with disabilities and special health care needs, and for parents with unconventional or shifting work hours" (CFC, 1996, p.8-9).

Only about half of child care centers in 1990 accepted infants, compared with almost all family child care homes (CFC, 1996, p. 51).

In 1990, only 3 percent of child care centers, 13 percent of regulated family child care and 20 percent of nonregulated family child care offered evening or night care. Only 10 percent of centers and 6 percent of family child care homes reported providing care on weekends (CFC, 1996, p. 51-52).

In 1990, the median length of children's current child care arrangements was 12 months (CFC, 1996, p. 55).

In 1993, the average family with an employed mother and a child under age five spent about $78 per week for child care for all children in the family (Casper, 1995).

Quality of Child Care

A large study of child care centers indicated that about 86 percent of the centers in the study provided mediocre or poor-quality services. Only 14 percent of the centers surveyed met levels of process quality that were high enough to support children's development. Twelve percent were judged to be of such poor quality that children's basic health and safety needs were only partly met and few learning experiences were provided. Quality in the rest (74 percent) of the centers was judged mediocre. Only 8 percent of classrooms serving infants were rated high quality; fully 40 percent were judged low quality. At least half the infant and toddler classrooms observed had poor general health practices (CFC, 1996, pp. 66, 68).

Raising quality by 25 percent from mediocre to good would increase total variable costs about 10 percent or about $300 per child per year (CFC, 1996, p. 79).

A large study of family child care and relative care rated only 9 percent of homes surveyed as good quality; 56 percent provided care considered adequate or custodial; and a full 35 percent were judged to be inadequate. The average provider was rated as nonresponsive or inappropriate in interactions with the children close to half the time (CFC, 1996, p. 68-9).

Children who are in high-quality programs are more likely to be emotionally secure, proficient in language use, able to

*Working poor parents have income less than the poverty line; working-class families have incomes above the poverty level but less than $25,000 per year; middle-class families have incomes $25,000 per year or higher.

**The Comprehensive Support Services (CSS) grant provides child care, transportation, and tuition assistance for low-income single parents and displaced homemakers who attend vocational programs.

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regulate aggressiveness, and cognitively advanced, at least in the short term. Studies of early-intervention programs for children from disadvantaged families indicate that children in child care may demonstrate long-term benefits as well, including enhanced school achievement, decreased placements in special education programs, higher life-time earnings, and decreased involvement with the criminal justice system (CFC, 1996, p. 11).

Effects on Employment

Parents are more likely to work if child care is inexpensive, and they are less likely to miss work or leave their jobs if child care is stable, conveniently located, of good quality, and satisfactory to them (CFC, 1996, p.11).

Parents report a greater incidence of losing time from work because the provider was not available in in-home rather than formal out-of-home arrangements (CFC, 1996, p. 58).

Employees who must miss work to care for their children cost U.S. companies $3 billion a year (Lozada, 1997, p. 14).

Corporate child care programs increased the company's ability to attract employees, lowered absenteeism, and improved employees' work commitment and retention (Gilbert, 1993, p. 116).

Problems with child care had caused 20 percent of AFDC mothers to quit school or a training program in the previous 12 months; another 20 percent were estimated to have returned to public assistance because of child care problems. Parents on AFDC with poor-quality care are more likely to leave their jobs than parents with good-quality care (CFC, 1996, p. 57-8).

The government's General Accounting Office suggests that subsidizing completely the child care costs of low-income women would lead to a 15 percent increase in employment of poor mothers (CFC, 1996, p. 57).

Implications for Educators, Employers, and Public Policy Makers

- Establish on-site child care at vocational schools for students and school personnel to use.
- Schedule adult classes at times when students are more likely to obtain child care.
- Increase child care support services and other funds to subsidize child care for students' children.
- Establish community child care referral services to help secondary and adult students link to convenient, affordable, and quality child care.
- Encourage employers to offer on-site child care or to collaborate with other employers in offering child care nearby.
- Encourage employers to establish services for employees by contracting sick child care and child care options for school-age children when not in school.
- Support local community efforts to establish non-profit child care during evenings, nights, and weekends.
- Educate all students about finding, identifying and monitoring quality child care and the consequences of poor-quality child care. Emphasize identifying strategies for securing reliable, quality child care during evening, night, and weekend work hours and developing back-up child care plans in case primary caregivers become unavailable.
- Support legislation to increase convenient quality child care in an affordable, cost effective way.

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Impact of Family on Work

Working Parents

In 1994, of all families with children under 18, 69.2 percent of these families were two-parent families. Of all families, 26.7 percent were maintained by the mother (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1994).

In 1995, over 61 percent of married women worked (U.S. Department of Labor, Sept. 1996).

In 1996, 3/4 of married women with children worked, and 38 percent worked full-time (Bianchi & Spain, 1996).

A wife's earnings now constitute 50 percent of the black family income, 40 percent of the Hispanic family income, and 35 percent of the white family income (Burbridge, 1992).

Approximately 80 percent of working women become pregnant during their working lives, and over half return to work within a year of childbirth (Sachs, 1994).

Family and Work Issues

Women tend to bring family issues into the workplace and men tend to bring work issues into the family. When the stresses of family life intrude upon the workplace, employees are absent more often, distracted in their work, and tend to leave the job (Nichols, 1994).

The highest work-family role strain is for the married female parent followed by single female parents. Women in all marital and parental statuses reported higher role strain than men (Nichols, 1994).

The spillover from family to work is higher among mothers of small children. In a study of lower middle income men and women, women with children under 12 were more likely to feel a negative impact of the family on work life because family responsibilities sometimes resulted in absenteeism, tardiness, and inefficiency. In addition, they reported that they hesitated to take on new responsibilities at work because of family demands. This pattern was not present in women with older children, implying that the employed mother of young children is "at risk" for negative spillover from family to work (Lerner, 1994, p. 32).

Nine out of ten women report experiencing time pressures. In fact, a plurality of women mentioned not having enough time together as a family as their greatest family concern (Families and Work Institute, 1995).

Mothers carry 90 percent of the burden of responsibility for child care—planning, organizing, delegating, supervising, and scheduling (Thompson & Walker, 1991).

Impact on Employment and Productivity

Seventy-one percent of the mothers in two-earner families reported taking time off from work to handle a family emergency, such as the sudden illness of a child, in contrast to only 15 percent of the fathers in these families (Moen, 1992, p. 41).

Recent surveys show that nearly one-third of working fathers have refused a new job, a promotion, or a transfer that threatened to reduce their family time (Gilbert, 1993, p. 43).

Companies report increasing male and female employee resistance to relocating because of the reluctance of one partner to relocate if it puts the other partner at a disadvantage (Gilbert, 1993, p. 99).

On average, women ages 18-65 spend about 30 hours per week in paid employment and 22 hours doing housework. Men average about ten hours per week doing housework, a figure which changes little when their wives work and they have young children in the household (Bianchi & Spain, 1996).

Household tasks differ by gender. Men contribute most to yard work and home maintenance, while women carry 75 percent of the burden for grocery shopping, cooking, laundry, and dishwashing. The difference is that men's tasks can be delayed, while women's tasks are constant (Bianchi & Spain, 1996).

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A study by the Families and Work Institute shows that allowing parental leave costs less than replacing employees permanently . . . Evidence indicates that maternity/parental leaves not only facilitate the retention of women, but also—together with other supportive policies (e.g., flexible hours and child care assistance)—are linked to an earlier return to work (Gilbert, 1993, p. 116).

Employer accommodations to pregnant workers play a significant role in producing high retention figures. Policies in the hours reduction and social support categories produce the strongest effects on retention. The total length of childbearing leave and the ability to avoid excessive work hours (over 40 per week) show strong and consistent effects on employee retention (Glass, 1996).

Women who believe that employed mothers can have just as good a relationship with their children as nonemployed mothers are significantly less likely to exit the labor force following childbirth (Glass, 1996).

Implications for Educators, Employers, and Public Policy Makers

- Educate ***all students*** in
  1) Basic skills regarding food preparation, household management and care, clothing care, yard maintenance, auto maintenance, and budgeting.
  2) Conflict management, including negotiation of household tasks and dealing with role strain.
  3) Quality child care and the consequences of poor-quality child care. Emphasize finding, identifying, and monitoring reliable, quality child care during evening, night, and weekend work hours and developing back-up child care plans in case primary caregivers become unavailable.
  4) Strategies to handle family emergencies when at work, including the sudden illness of a child.

- Encourage all students to develop transferable skills in case of relocation.

- Support all students, especially women with young children, in accepting new work responsibilities while also maintaining a quality family life.

- Use management and teaching strategies that increase flexibility when offering adult vocational programs (i.e., flexible scheduling of classroom and lab instruction, distance learning, and off-site learning).

- Encourage employers to offer family-friendly policies and/or benefits (i.e., flextime, part-time, job-sharing, compressed work schedules, working at home, child care assistance, and parental leave).

- Educate managers, supervisors, and administrators in education and business arenas to socially support employees who have family responsibilities.

- Support legislation to institute family-friendly work policies.

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Impact of Work on Family

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In 1995, over 61 percent of married women worked (U.S. Department of Labor, Sept. 1996).

In 1996, 3/4 of married women with children worked, and 38 percent worked full-time (Bianchi & Spain, 1996).

A wife's earnings now constitute 50 percent of the black family income, 40 percent of the Hispanic family income, and 35 percent of the white family income (Burbridge, 1992).

Approximately 80 percent of working women become pregnant during their working lives, and over half return to work within a year of childbirth (Sachs, 1994).

If money were not a concern, twice as many women would choose part-time (33 percent) over full-time (15 percent). In addition, twenty-eight percent of men show an interest in part-time work (Families and Work Institute, 1995).

Work and Family Issues

Women tend to bring family issues into the workplace and men tend to bring work issues into the family. When the stresses of family life intrude upon the workplace, employees are absent more often, distracted in their work, and tend to leave the job (Nichols, 1994).

When family members are highly stressed at work, they tend to reduce their involvement at home. Interpersonal conflicts at work tend to spillover into more spousal arguments at home the same evening (Menaghan & Parcel, 1991).

Higher number of hours worked and shift work are associated with increased family conflict (Menaghan & Parcel, 1991).

The highest work-family role strain is for the married female parent followed by single female parents. Women in all marital and parental statuses reported higher role strain than men (Nichols, 1994).

In a survey of 1,003 working parents, almost 8 in 10 working parents experienced a workplace change that had a positive effect on the family (learning new equipment/computers, adjusted work hours, new benefits, bonus, etc.) while nearly two-thirds (62 percent) have experienced a change in the workplace that has affected their family in a negative way. These negative impacts have been time infringement, pay cuts, stress, etc. (Yankelovich Partners, Inc., 1996).

More than half of employed women do work for their jobs at home at least some of the time (Families and Work Institute, 1995).

Nine out of ten women report experiencing time pressures. In fact, a plurality of women mentioned not having enough time together as a family as their greatest family concern (Families and Work Institute, 1995).

Employed women whose work is seen as an important contribution to the family are better able to negotiate the distribution of household work (Allen & Baber, 1994).

The more time wives spend at paid work, the less time they spend at housework (Nichols, 1994).

Research does tend to support the link between maternal employment and daughters' attitudes, aspirations, and behaviors. Many studies have found that women aspire to less traditional careers, have higher educational goals, and are more likely to plan to combine employment and motherhood if their mothers are employed (Lerner, 1994, p. 85).

Both female and male children of employed mothers hold less stereotypic attitudes about gender roles than do children of nonemployed mothers (Gilbert, 1993, p. 69).

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continued

Impact on Employment and Productivity

Fifty-six percent of companies offer flexible scheduling in the form of flextime, part-time employment, job-sharing, compressed work schedules, or work at home. Of the Fortune 500 companies, 86 percent have introduced new work/family programs. The reasons are many: to improve recruitment and retention, increase morale, reduce stress, and keep up with the competition (Gilbert, 1993, p. 101).

Men use flextime to about the same degree as women but are less likely to take extended formal leaves (Gilbert, 1993, p. 117).

Over 70 percent of pregnant employees were still employed at the same job six months following childbirth (Glass, 1996).

Working mothers with young children who felt their supervisor was indifferent or hostile to their needs were statistically more likely to change jobs or exit the labor force, even after controlling for the effects of wages and other job characteristics (Glass, 1996).

Implications for Educators, Employers, and Public Policy Makers

- Educate all students about the importance of and ways to balance work and family, including issues and skills related to household tasks, role strain, interpersonal conflicts, stress, and child care.
- Provide training for educators to understand work and family issues as they relate to student learning and work behavior.
- Use management and teaching strategies that increase flexibility when offering adult vocational programs, especially employer-sponsored programs (i.e., flexible scheduling of classroom and lab instruction, distance learning, and off-site learning).
- Establish on-site child care for secondary and adult students.
- Restructure jobs (temporarily or permanently) so employees with family responsibilities can manage during high stress or crises.
- Encourage employers to offer family-friendly policies and/or benefits (i.e., flextime, part-time, job-sharing, compressed work schedules, working at home, child care assistance, and parental leave).
- Educate managers, supervisors, and administrators in education and business arenas to socially support employees who have family responsibilities.
- Educate all students about their legal rights, including the Family and Medical Leave Act.

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